

Jester's Lucky Cold

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Summary: Jester catches a cold which saves his life.

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Disclaimer: The characters of the Sovereign, the Empress and the Jester belong to Renaissance Pictures and are inspired by the television series: Hercules The Legendary Journeys. This story is written for entertainment purposes only. No money is being made from this story. I have simply borrowed the characters from the alternate universe..inspired by the Hercules episode in which the Sovereign, the Empress and the Jester live in an alternate reality. While the characters of this story come from the Hercules series, the story itself is inspired by Aesops fable "The Lion and his three counselors".

Summary: The Sovereign is alarmed to find out that he has bad breath. He asks all his subjects if this is true. Only the Jester lives to tell this amusing tale. Moral of the story straight from Aesop's fable: In dangerous times, wise men say nothing.

JESTER'S LUCKY COLD

Iolaus sneezes and wheezes. "Atchoo!..I hate having a cold..I can't smell anything and worse of all I'm so congested I can't taste the food!..but at least I won't be able to taste Hercules' bad cooking!"

Hercules retorts "Well at least I do the cooking otherwise we'd be eating raw fish!"

"Better to eat raw fish than burnt fish" returns Iolaus..."Hey since I have a cold and can't taste anything..feel free to burn as many fish as you'd like Herc!"

"Iolaus..I do NOT burn the fish..I just like my fish well-done" says Hercules...

"Don't worry guys..I'll do the cooking.." bounced Iolaus2."You know Hercules, you do look alittle piqued..are you sure you're not catching Iolaus' cold?"

"Herc never gets sick..it's that half-God blood of his..it keeps him from getting sick! Atchoo!" sneezed Iolaus..

"Oh I don't know, Iolaus..Hercules looks rather pale and he didn't even complain when we decided to stop to camp..I've been with Sovereign all my life..I think Hercules doesn't want you to know he's sick...look over there..Hercules is hiding behind that tree..he must be too proud to admit he's sick!" added Iolaus2

"Oh nah..Herc is just modest..it's just the call of nature.. he doesn't like to do it in the bushes..thinks it's too public..nah Herc's just shy.." replies Iolaus..

"No..Iolaus..I think I'm going to pick some echinacea leaves for tea..I think both of you are sick..and the echinacea tea will help with the sniffing..and help you sleep..says the Jester..."You wait here and rest..Iolaus.., I'll be right back..."

From behind a tree, Hercules tries to stifle a sneeze as he feels a perculiar itching in his nose. Hercules puts a finger to his nose as Iolaus2 walks by to go pick some echinacea tea leaves...."Something wrong with your nose, Hercules?"

Hercules realizes that if he lets his finger off his nose he would sneeze. In a slightly congested sounding voice, Hercules says "No, I feel fine..take care of Iolaus, I..."before Hercules could continue, he let out a loud "Atchoo!"

"I heard that!" cries Iolaus "Ha! Ha! Herc, you have a cold too!..I can't believe it! I guess it's that half-mortal side catching up with you!"

"Iolaus, please don't sound so happy that I'm sick!" whines Hercules. "It's awful to be sick and tired!"

"Aren't half-Gods such whiners? cooed an estatic Iolaus his blue cerulean eyes gleaming with mischief...his curly blond hair unbrushed..."Atchoo!" sneezes Iolaus...

Jester finishes cooking the fish. He hands the fish to both Hercules and Iolaus. Everyone sits by the fire and quietly eats their fish except for Jester. The Jester then hands both Hercules and Iolaus their echinacea tea and makes them both swallow it.

"Agh! Do I have to drink THIS? complains Iolaus.."It tastes so bitter.."

"Ha..I thought I was the whiner.." added Hercules. Hercules grimaced as he drank the bitter tasting tea.."

"Ha! Ha! I guess YOU didn't like the tea either!"..teases Iolaus...

"You know, having a cold isn't so bad..as a matter of fact..for me, having a cold saved my life" continues the Jester...

Both Hercules and Iolaus sniffing and sneezing away look at Jester and say in unison "How did having a cold save your life? Jester?"

Meanwhile, the Jester signals both Hercules and Iolaus by the fire. The tea clears up Iolaus and Hercules' cold symptoms. Both notice the intense look on the Jester's face. A sad faraway look comes into the Jester's blue cerulean eyes. The firelight highlights the Jester's blond curly hair...sitting with his legs crossed..the Jester begins his incredible story...

"You see, guys, the Sovereign was having a really bad day...

The Sovereign ran his hand through his chestnut hair. His blue azure eyes were angry. The Sovereign was in an irritable mood. The Jester tried his best to cheer his majesty up. The Jester, also known as Iolaus2 tried all his best jokes and the Sovereign still looked angry. The Jester, his cerulean blue eyes glowed with fear and apprehension for whenever the Sovereign was in a bad mood, heads would roll. The Jester, in his fear absentmindedly fingered his neck and decided to go back to the scroll books to make a new batch of jokes so that the Sovereign would not take off his head. The Sovereign was in a bad mood because the Empress had told the Sovereign that his breath was most unpleasant. After spending the morning rinsing his mouth out with mint leaves, the Sovereign summoned his counselors.

First he called on a simple farmer

"Simple farmer", the Sovereign roared, opening wide his great mouth, "would you say that my breath smells unpleasant?"

Believing that the Sovereign wanted an honest answer, the simple farmer said "Begging your majesty's pardon, but your majesty has very bad breath" The Sovereign became enraged. "Off with his head! Nobody dares insult the Sovereign!"..The poor farmer found himself whisked away by the guards.

The next morning, the whole village gathered around the execution gallow. The Simple Farmer had his head promptly chopped off. The Sovereign forced all the villagers to applaud the execution or risk being executed themselves.

The Empress looked bored and repeated once again to the Sovereign "Sovereign, despite the mint leaves you have been chewing..you still have bad breath..I will not sleep with you until you have cleaned up your bad breath.." said the Empress Nebula.

The Sovereign was in a most inhospitable mood. He found some exotic mint leaves from a faraway country and decided to chew on these leaves to improve his breath. He then decided to ask yet another counselor on what he thought of his breath.

So, the Sovereign called on Autoycus.

"Autolycus, what do you think of my breath? " roared the Sovereign. He had known Autolycus all his life and knew he could trust this man's answer. After all Autolycus was known as the best gambler and hustler in the world and it was Autolycus who drove Zeus mad with the

madness potion.

Autolycus was very careful before answering the Sovereign's question. All his life, Autolycus had already prided himself on his cunning and on his wit. After all, Autolycus had a reputation to uphold--King of Hustlers and Hucksters! as well as being the Sovereign's personal advisor. Autolycus, catching sight of the carcass of the simple farmer's body still hanging from the gallows decided to lie "Why your majesty, you have a breath as sweet as blossoms in the spring..as beautiful smelling as lavenders after a spring rain..or a wet meadow in the morning condensing air..like a woman's perfume when making furious love..."

Before Autolycus, King of Hustlers and Hucksters could finish his sentence, the Sovereign had Autolycus hauled to the gallows "Autolycus, you are a liar and a cheat..you lie to me about my breath..now you shall die by your lie"

The villagers gathered in front of the gallows. The guards took Autolycus to the gallows. The executioner promptly chopped off Autolycus' head. The Sovereign once again forced the villagers to applaud the execution or risk being executed themselves.

Once again, the Empress was bored. She said to the Sovereign "Sovereign, despite the mint leaves you have been chewing..you still have bad breath..I will not sleep with you until you have cleaned up your bad breath". The Empress Nebula walked away from the spectacle of Autolycus' death with a look of extreme indifference and apathy.

The Sovereign spent the next morning on yet another way to rid himself of his bad breath. He hired a sorcerer to conjure up a spell to make the Empress think that he had good breath. To make sure the spell worked, the Sovereign summoned another counselor to his throne.

So the Sovereign called on the Jester, Iolaus 2.

"Jester, I require your advice" commenced the Sovereign. "I need to know if you think I have bad breath"

The Jester shook his head and when he did, the bells of his hat rang. The Jester coughed and sneezed. Then he took out a pink and yellow polka-dotted hankie and blew his nose hard and loudly before he looked straight into the Sovereign's azure eyes and responded with as much aplomb as possible "Your majesty" croaked the Jester "truly, I have such a cold in the head that I cannot smell at all..."

The Sovereign simply looked sympathetic at the Jester. "I have an idea...come Jester..you are truly brilliant..follow me". The Sovereign led the Jester to the sorcerer and said "Can you give Empress Nebula a cold?"

"Why yes, Sovereign, I can" said the sorcerer. That night, the sorcerer gave Empress Nebula a cold spell. Empress Nebula had such a bad cold that she could not taste food or smell anything for her nose was so congested.

With a smiling face, the Sovereign summoned Empress Nebula into his royal chambers and roared "Empress Nebula, can you smell my bad

breath..?"

"I'm sorry your majesty..but last night I got such a cold in the head that I cannot smell at all..so no your majesty does not have bad breath.." said the Empress as she sniffed on her hankie.

"Well then Empress..you promised me that as soon as you could not smell my breath, you would once again share the royal bed..now a promise is a promise..come to bed with me, Empress" demanded the Sovereign his azure eyes blazing with authority...

Admitting her defeat, the Empress sniffled and spent the night with the Sovereign. The next day, the Sovereign rewarded the Jester with a permanent post at his castle as the royal advisor taking the place of the two dead counselors...

As the Jester finished his tale, both Hercules and Iolaus had been holding their hands to their noses to avoid sneezing and to avoid interrupting the Jester's tale, so at the precise moment when the Jester finished..they both let out a loud "Atchoo!"

"So you see, for me having a cold saved my head...the Sovereign did not chop off my head because I could not smell his bad breath.....so I think that having a cold is considered a lucky sign from the Gods...the moral to this tale, Hercules and Iolaus is this : Sometimes in times of danger, it is best for wise men to say nothing.."

"Wow!" exclaims Iolaus his blue cerulean eyes wide with wonder.."That's a deep tale!..I guess I am supposed to be grateful to the Gods that I have a cold and I can't smell Hercules' bad breath and taste Hercules' bad cooking! or smell Hercules bad body odor and also smell Hercules...

"Hey..you know at least I bathe every day..you're the one who smells....as bad as your Uncle Flavius and worse..bad odors don't run in MY family! exclaims an indignant Hercules...

"Yeah, you know Herc, it's a shame we got sick just as Jester is visiting us..I mean I would REALLY love to taste HIS cooking!" complains Iolaus...

"Well, it's not my fault..YOU'RE the one who fell into the lake and then insisted on walking in your wet clothes to Mother's house..we could have stopped and waited for your clothes to dry out..you're the one who got sick first..retorts Hercules...

"Okay guys..we have a long day tomorrow..and I am really looking forward to seeing Nautica again so if we are going to make the beach by tomorrow, I suggest you both get to sleep....just consider yourselves lucky.." says the Jester mysteriously..

"Lucky how? " asks Hercules..Iolaus had already rolled on his back and was already fast asleep...

"Well, lucky colds exist..for if it weren't for that cold that I had I wouldn't have lived to meet my beautiful Nautica!" exclaims a very sleepy Jester as he drifted off to sleep..

"Well, maybe I don't think having colds is lucky..but I do consider

myself lucky to have a good friend like you, Jester..goodnight and sweet dreams.." as Hercules tucked Jester into his bedroll before putting out the campfire.."Yes, I am the luckiest man in the world to have such good friends as Iolaus and Jester..I am glad that Jester had his lucky cold..yes indeed..thank the Gods for Jester's Lucky cold" mumbled Hercules as he drifted off to sleep.

End
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